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Remembering Those Who Gave All

As the Memorial Day holiday approaches, it is important to remember the sacrifices of fallen service members. There are tours slated for participants to the Valor in the Pacific National Monument USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor and the Punchbowl National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. The Island of Oahu has many military memorials that honor those who have fallen.

USS Missouri Battleship Memorial. At the end of WWII, the Japanese formally surrendered on the deck of the “Mighty Mo.” The Missouri is located on Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor.

USS Bowfin Submarine Memorial. The USS Bowfin Submarine was launched one year after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and it was known at the “Pearl Harbor Avenger.” Pearl Harbor visitors can tour the USS Bowfin and visit the adjacent submarine museum.

USS Oklahoma Memorial in Pearl Harbor. This Pearl Harbor memorial is to the 429 Marines and Sailors who died aboard the USS Oklahoma, during the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. It is located on Ford Island adjacent to the USS Missouri Battleship.

Pacific Fleet Submarine Waterfront Memorial. This submarine memorial in Pearl Harbor is a tribute to the 52 submarines destroyed and more than 3,500 service members that died during World War II.

Memorial to Fallen Hawaiian Warriors. This memorial is also called “Na Lehua Heleei,” sits in front of the Army Museum of Hawaii in Fort DeRussy Park in Waikiki.

Waikiki War Memorial Natatorium. This memorial was built in 1927 to honor the 179 men from Hawaii who were killed in World War I.

Hawaii State Veterans Memorial. This memorial, located in downtown Honolulu, is dedicated to the men and women of Hawaii who served in the United States Military.

Hawaii Korean and Vietnam War Memorial. This memorial is dedicated to the Veterans of the Korean War and the Vietnam War and is located in downtown Honolulu.

Haleiwa Beach War Memorial. This memorial located on the North Shore of Oahu is dedicated to Veterans from Waialua and Kahuku that died during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

Pacific War Memorial in Kaneohe. This replica of the national Iwo Jima Memorial in Connecticut was dedicated on March 16, 2002. The area surrounding the memorial is paved with bricks inscribed with the names of the veterans who served in the Pacific during World War II. The memorial is located outside the Kaneohe Marine Base.

A Whole New World

The Golden Age Games have helped open up a whole new world for 90 year old WWII Marine Veteran Thomas J. Fortini.

“This is my second year to participate, and I have a new sense of independence. Losing your vision is a whole new and different world, especially when you walk into the ladies room,” said Fortini.

“At first I resisted VA’s help when I was offered training at the VA Blind Center. They really helped me gain my independence with all the devices and services available to the visually impaired. I can once again participate in sports and be active and competitive.

There’s a spirit of camaraderie at the Games among those who have similar experiences and are in the same physical situation. Learning from each other is a very rewarding experience.

“The Games have really opened him up. I have seen such a positive change in him since he began competing last year. He is so motivated that he’s working on a fundraiser to support the team for next year,” said Coach Danny Rhines.

“I feel like I’ve accomplished something towards my life when I’m at the Games. I’m doing the best I can and then some,” said Fortini.

Church on the Beach

A non-denominational church service will take place Sunday from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. near the paved walkway to the beach behind the Hilton adjacent to the walkway pier. Beach mats and chairs for first comers. Seating areas are available for all including wheelchairs. Music will include several patriotic song choices to coincide with the Memorial Day theme. Everyone is welcome for this uplifting experience.

World War II Vets Still Ready for Action

Over 820 Veterans are competing in the 25th National Veterans Golden Age Games, 48 of whom are visually impaired. The Battle Born Blind Bowlers team from Reno, Nev. boasts three World War II Veterans on their team.

Elmer Doege, an 86 year old Navy Veteran, arrived in Pearl Harbor in March 1942. Doege, who was an 18 year old seaman third class aviation machinist said, “When I landed (over there) it was all cluttered up. Planes were all piled up on the ramps and a

lot of the ships were sunk.” He spent a year at Pearl Harbor clearing debris to reopen the harbor then moved to Honolulu where he spent 18 months maintaining PBM and PBY aircraft that were evacuating the wounded from the Pacific theater. Returning to Oahu brings back many memories for Elmer.

He is happy to be here for the Games but at the same time remembers his time here with strong emotions. A Veteran who loves sports, he will compete in visually impaired horseshoes, bowling and shuffleboard.

World War II Veteran Charles Landolt also served in the Navy in the Pacific. He enlisted at the age of 17 and served as a Gunner’s Mate. He said about his service, “I did not see any combat during the war, but I did serve on convoys to guard against German submarines.” After serving four years in the Navy he was discharged and became an auto mechanic. Landolt, who is at the Games for the fourth time said, “To me, the games help to make relationships with other Veterans. It is a wonderful thing for everyone who goes.” Charles, who will compete in visually impaired horseshoes, bowling, and shuffleboard has won two gold medals and one silver at past Games and hopes to win gold again this year.

Albert Porta is also a World War II Veteran. He is a Volunteer for the Battle Born Blind Bowlers team and a competitor who is attending his fifth Golden Age Games. Porta joined the Army Air Corps in November 1942 and after pilot training was flying B-17 aircraft in the European Theater. His aircraft was shot down over Germany in 1945, he was captured by the Germans and spent seven months in a prisoner of war camp. He stayed in the military after the war and spent 33 years in the Air Force, 23 years on active duty and 10 years in the reserve. Albert, who will compete in golf, shuffleboard and ping pong has volunteered at the VA Medical Center in Reno, NV for 10 years and enjoys meeting all of the people at the Games and the opportunity to help serve the Battle Born Blind Bowlers team.

The First Hawaiians

The culture of Hawaii has its origins in the culture of the Native Hawaiians. The island chain was first settled by Polynesian explorers from islands of Samoa, Tahiti, Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand, and the Marquesas between 800 and 1000 A.D. Hawaii has become a home to many different ethnic groups in the last 200 years, each adding elements of its own culture to local life.

One of the most identifiable symbols of Hawaii is the grass skirt, which Hula dancers wore and was originally constructed from the outer bark and leaves of the banana tree. The intricate feathered capes, cloaks, and headdresses worn by Hawaiian nobility and royalty are easily the most stunning of all traditional garments. Red was a color of holy, innate power, and yellow was a color of secular, political power.

The 5 vowels a, e, i, o and u as well as the seven consonants h, k, l, m, n, p, and w make up the entire Hawaiian alphabet. In the Hawaiian language a consonant is always followed by a vowel, which also means all Hawaiian words end in a vowel.

Question of the Day:

What did you forget to pack in your suitcase?

Dorsey Nelson

Texas (Army)

I forgot to pack my underwear. Yes, I am wearing some now but I had to go buy it.

Ron “Moon” Walker

California (Air Force)

I actually overpacked but it doesn't matter. I am so jazzed. Horseshoes is my first event and these are my first games. I love it.

John Miller

Indiana (Air Force)

I'm in the horseshoe tournament and I forgot my horseshoes.

Nelden Ellison

California (Air Force)

I packed too much. I know I forgot something but I forgot what it was.

Federico Paz

California (Army)

I didn't forget anything. I actually overpacked.

Odds & Ends

NVGAG Medical Suite

Available 24 hours May 28-June 1 at Hilton Tapa Tower, Room 3330. The medical team cannot write new prescriptions for visiting athletes and will not write prescriptions for narcotics and other controlled drugs.

Note for Sunday Croquet

There are no food or drink vendors at the venue. Please make sure you bring lunch along with plenty of water to drink.

Shuffleboard Age 60-64

Shuffleboard for age 60-64 Sunday will now begin at 7:00 a.m.

Outrigger Canoeing

Please make sure you check in at the check-in point. If you've already had a chance to canoe, please let others who haven't tried it yet.

Wheelchair & Prosthetics

Durable medical equipment, prosthetics, and wheelchair repair by Invacare. Located at Hilton Tapa Tower 2nd floor, Iolani Suites 5-6. Available May 28-31 from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; June 1 from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. From your Hilton hotel room dial 62063.

Golf Participants

If you played Golf on Friday, be sure to pick up your golf towel at Customer Service at Tapa Tower 2nd floor, room Honolulu 2.

Pearl Harbor

Tours available Sunday and Tuesday; no tour on Memorial Day. Only cell phones, cameras and wallets permitted inside. Storage for purses or backpacks available for a fee. Items may not be left on the motor coach.

Late Arrivals

All Veterans who checked in late and did not receive their memorabilia items may come to Customer Service in Tapa Tower 2nd floor, room Honolulu 2 starting Tuesday, May 31 at noon

Find An Old Friend

A white board for messages is near the elevators on Tapa 2nd floor.

Lost and Found

Inside Honolulu 2 room, Tapa Tower 2nd floor.

For Medaling Athletes

Please be at the Medals Ceremony 45 minutes in advance.

Shuttle Schedule

Boarding at Tapa Tower Bus Depot

15 minutes before departure times:

- Hawaii Convention Center Shuffle board, Table Tennis - 6:45 a.m.
- Ke'ehi Lagoon Park Croquet - 6:30 a.m. • Pearl Harbor - 8:00 and 11:00 a.m.